

## THE CONGRESS OF LOCAL AND REGIONAL AUTHORITIES

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### **Declaration 3 (2014)<sup>1</sup> Separatist tensions in Ukraine and neighbouring countries**

1. In the spirit of the “Chisinau Declaration”, adopted by the Committee on the Honouring of Obligations and Commitments by Member States of the European Charter of Local Self Government, the Congress expresses its grave concern about the situation in Ukraine and other countries of the region.

2. During its last session, the Congress condemned the annexation of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol by the Russian Federation.

3. Today, the Congress condemns Russia’s military intervention in the east of Ukraine, and condemns all forms of pressure by Russia on its neighbours.

4. The security of this continent is seriously threatened by the Russian Federation’s repeated failure to comply with international rules and the principles and values of the Council of Europe that it signed up to when it joined the Organisation.

5. For years, we have been working to improve local and regional autonomy in Europe. We are convinced that subsidiarity benefits all levels of governance. That is why we encourage the Ukrainian authorities to pursue their reforms to deepen local and regional democracy and decentralisation in line with the recommendations made by the Congress in this regard. The Congress will continue its efforts to accompany these reforms.

6. Respect for the principles of international law, such as territorial integrity, sovereignty and the inviolability of the internationally recognised borders of States are imperative for the peaceful settlement of conflicts in Georgia, Ukraine, Azerbaijan and the Republic of Moldova, all of which are faced with separatist movements. Armed separatism, supported by mercenaries and the intervention of foreign troops, is the antithesis of all that the Congress stands for and has created a humanitarian crisis that the national authorities and the international community must resolve together.

7. The Congress calls for an independent and thorough international investigation into all human rights violations committed in Ukraine during and since the Maidan events of February 2014.

8. The Congress supports the initiatives and activities of the Secretary General of the Council of Europe and its other bodies aimed at promoting a peaceful settlement in Ukraine.

9. What has taken place in Crimea (Ukraine), in South Ossetia and Abkhazia (Georgia), and in Transnistria (Republic of Moldova), and what is happening today in the east of Ukraine is totally contrary to the Europe of the regions that we are striving to achieve. At the same time, the Congress reaffirms its commitment to a peaceful dialogue on the basis of European values, especially the respect for human rights, including the language rights of national minorities. With regard to the east of Ukraine, a ceasefire has been agreed in Minsk between the different parties involved in the conflict. This ceasefire must be effectively and comprehensively implemented and must be followed by a political dialogue to enable Ukraine to recover its territorial integrity.

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1. Adopted by the Congress on 16 October 2014, 3rd Sitting (see Document CG(27)16FINAL), rapporteur: Marc Cools, Belgium (L, ILDG).